

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NICARAGUA WARNS AGAINST "MESSING WITH MARY"

April 29, 1997 (David W. Cloud, Fundamental Baptist News Service, 1701 N. Harns Rd., Oak Harbor, WA 98277) - The Roman Catholic hierarchy is pressuring Nicaragua's public schools to use textbooks which promote Catholicism and which blame racial tension and other societal problems on Protestants. The textbooks are produced by the Catholic archdiocese of Managua. Cardinal Silvio Fonseca met with school directors before the school year began in February, and urged them to use the books and said all parents should buy the books for their children."

A textbook for fourth grade of secondary school has a picture of Pope John Paul II on the cover and warns Protestants not to criticise Catholic devotion to the Virgin Mary. "To scorn Mary is an absurdity, something only the devil can incite," the textbook states. "Be careful, Protestant brothers. You're playing with fire. If you want to increase your numbers by misleading unprepared Catholics, don't mess with Mary, the Mother of Jesus and our mother. It's something serious for which you'll pay heavily."

The same book blames racial tension on Protestants. "Where Protestants are the majority, there have almost always been racial struggles," the book states, claiming that Protestants in the United States were responsible for discrimination against blacks. "This hasn't happened in other countries ... with a Catholic majority," the text adds (Ecumenical News International, April 28, 1997).